

# CONTENTS

PREFACE	...	...	iii
1. MAN'S GREATEST ADVENTURE	...	...	1
2. UNDERSTANDING THE UNREALITY OF MATTER	...	...	17
3. THE DREAM NATURE OF THE WORLD	...	...	23
4. REINCARNATION: THE SOUL'S JOURNEY TO PERFECTION	...	...	34

# Man's Greatest Adventure

*Self-Realization Fellowship International Headquarters,  
Los Angeles, California, February 29, 1940*

Life is the greatest adventure imaginable. Although some lives are without much interest and excitement, others are full of extraordinary experiences. I heard of a man who tried thirty-two times to commit suicide, and something happened every time to prevent him. Imagine what it would be like to know all about the lives of all the people who are now on earth, and those who are gone, and those who are yet to come! Such is God's power. Jesus said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without [the knowledge of] your Father."\* The lifetimes of experiences of all men are in God's memory. It is difficult indeed to conceive of a consciousness that is aware of everything that has ever happened. Yet to fathom the nature of Spirit is the greatest adventure in this universe. I will give you a picture of it as it is coming at this moment before my spiritual eye.†

Truths are more than imagination; they are real. Yet their origin is a thought in the mind of God. All of the different forms of atomic matter, for example, are but materialized thoughts of God—they can be reconverted into thoughts,

\* *Matthew 10 : 29.*

† The telescopic gaze of intuition. During deep meditation the single or spiritual eye becomes visible within the central part of the forehead. Great yogis who live unbrokenly in the state of God-consciousness are able to behold it whether meditating or carrying on ordinary activities.

and the thoughts can again be materialized into objects. Man also has the power to conceive ideas, but his imagination is not very strong. If his imagination became powerful enough, man could create material objects on earth.\* He has latent within him the same creative power by which God, even as He thought, materialized His mental creations in the world. But it has become next to impossible for man to materialize his thoughts because he has not utilized the free power, the divine power of thought, bestowed on him by God.

When we try to imagine the consciousness of God we wonder how He can remember all things, because we judge everything by the standard of our own mental capacity. We understand according to our own experience. A person whose memory is not strong tends to assume that everyone else's memory is the same way. Yet there are persons of exceptional memory who can recall a whole book, perhaps, just as easily as you can remember a few lines. Those who are forgetful find it difficult to realize that others can have an unfailing power of recollection.

A jeweller remembers his jewels, a bookkeeper the figures in his books; so God is able to remember everything that He has created in this universe. Being gifted with almighty power, He has instant recall of everything that has ever happened. God does not need a limited physical brain to remember what has passed. His limitless consciousness is all-knowing.

\* Jesus spoke of the divine potential in that man who realizes the presence of God within himself: "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me.... I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do..." (*John 14 : 11-12*).

## **The Origin and Power of Memory**

Memory is a wondrous power. All human memory comes from God's tremendous memory. For example, you cannot tell me about all the motion pictures you have seen since birth, but if I were to show you one of those films again, you would instantly recall it. The divine underlying memory is right there within you, ever recognizing experiences that have passed. As soon as you see the opening scene again, the whole story comes back to you. "Oh, I saw this picture before," you say. "I remember how it ended."

How is it that we can recognize a picture—every detail of it—that we have seen years ago? Because all happenings are recorded in the brain. As soon as you put the needle of attention on a certain record of experience, your memory begins to play back that experience. If I ask where you were sitting when we were here together last Thursday, you recall it and begin to remember other things as well. If I ask, "What did I say?" my words start coming back to you.

The inner power of memory comes from God and is perfect. It never forgets. The ordinary man's memory cannot hold the consciousness of all experiences at one time, but the underlying divine memory retains everything simultaneously and permanently. Therefore good or poor memory is a matter of conviction. You have convinced yourself that you have a weak memory and so you have a weak memory. However, it is not easy to jump from this belief to the opposite. Much effort is required to convince yourself that your memory is in actuality a manifestation of the all-recalling divine memory of God.

The greatest human memory is naught but a borrowing from the unlimited consciousness of God, in which are recorded all the adventures of all human beings and other life-forms.

## Creation—Dual Adventure of God and Man

The story of God's creation is marvellous—how He projected into existence all beings on this earth, and how He is working behind the scenes to bring us back to our real existence in Him. It is almost impossible to describe in human language the cosmic adventure of God's creation and its subtle intertwining with the individual life-adventures of countless human beings.

We find that human beings live on the average sixty years, the crocodile from sixty to a hundred. The redwood tree lives for two thousand years, the dog only about fourteen, and the horse at most about thirty-six years. It is evident that Someone has fixed these various life-spans. Yet we hear of some great yogis who have lived for hundreds of years.\* I know definitely that Mahavatar Babaji† has lived for centuries and is still in his body in perfect youth. Trailanga Swami‡ is said to have lived for more than three hundred years. Truth is more fascinating than fiction.

\* "Great saints who have awakened from the cosmic mayic dream and have realized this world as an idea in the Divine Mind, can do as they wish with the body, knowing it to be only a manipulatable form of condensed or frozen energy. Though physical scientists now understand that matter is nothing but congealed energy, illumined masters have passed victoriously from theory to practice in the field of matter control" (*Autobiography of a Yogi*, chapter 31).

† *Mahavatar*, "great or divine incarnation"; *Babaji*, "revered father." He is the guru of LahiriMahasaya, who in turn is the guru of Swami Sri Yukteswar, the guru of Paramahansa Yogananda. Babaji's transcendental life and powers are described in *Autobiography of a Yogi*.

‡ In addition to his extraordinary age, Trailanga Swami was noted for his many miracles. He weighed three hundred pounds, although he rarely ate. Often he would meditate for days, seated on top of the Ganges waters; or remain sometimes hidden for long periods under its waves. He was often seen at the Manikarnika Ghat, sitting motionless in the sun on the blistering stone slabs. His habitual disregard of nature's laws was a constant reminder to those who saw him that oneness with God is the highest law.